THE CONCEPT OF SALVATION IN CHRISTIAN MISSION

A Professional Project

Presented to

The Faculty of

The School of Theology at Claremont

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Ministry

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by

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This professional project, completed by

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has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Theology at Claremont in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

In this professional project, the author is concerned with the division between evangelicals and ecumenicals within the Christian church. One of the reasons comes from their different understanding of salvation in mission.

The evangelicals hold the classical understanding of Christian mission. Salvation is primarily personal. Therefore the church's primary mission is proclamation of the gospel, conversion, and church planting. However, the saved person tends to acquiesce to the status quo and is longing for the life beyond.

For the ecumenicals salvation is social. It is understood in terms of humanization, revolution and political liberation. This leads them to the predominant emphasis of the present life on earth, disregarding the eschatological dimension of salvation.

In chapter II, the author investigates the biblical concept of salvation. In the Old Testament, salvation is communual. Individual identity can be found only by participation in the life of the community. However, with this overarching communual framework, the idea of individuality is preserved. Salvation is also predominantly this worldly, but it will be fully consummated at the end of the age. In

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the New Testament the gift of salvation must be appropriated by the individual. The social dimension of salvation is expressed as the "table fellowship at the Kingdom of God" in the Synoptic Gospels and the "Body of Christ" in Paul. In the New Testament, salvation is both eschatological as well as present gift. The author concludes from his finding that the biblical perspective on salvation is wholistic. It is not "either/or" but "both/and".

In chapter III the author discerns favorable signs of change in both evangelical and ecumenical groups. They realize that the dichotomy of individual vs social, "this worldly" vs "other worldly", and horizontal vs vertical salvation is contrary to the biblical conception of salvation. The author believes that the biblical wholistic conception of salvation was well formulated at the World Council of Churches' conference on "Salvation Today" at Bangkok in 1973. This in conjunction with the evangelical Lausanne Congress of 1974 and the Nairobi Assembly of World Council of Churches in 1975 leads the author to conclude that both sides are now in the process of discovering the wholistic view of salvation for Christian missions.

Finally, the author argues that the wholistic biblical perspective on salvation should provide groundwork for the convergence and unity of the evangelical and ecumenical groups in the Christian church.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Problem

In the sixties and the beginning of the seventies there has been a growing polarization and confrontation between ecumenicals and evangelicals in the understanding of salvation in Christian mission. For the evangelicals salvation is personal and individual. The primary task of the church is not to humanize social structures, but to evangelize the world. Man's spiritual welfare must always take precedence over his material needs. Reconciling man to God is the first order of priority before men can be reconciled to men. For the ecumenicals salvation is social. The individual's relationship with his environment is integral. It is wrong to talk about salvation for man without including the political and social structures of which the individual is part.

This division within the Christian church is a betrayal of the unity and wholeness of the Body of Christ.

Purpose of the Study

In this professional project, we shall examine the views of the evangelicals and the ecumenicals in the light of the biblical perspective. It is our hope that, by dis-

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covering the biblical understanding of salvation, both circles can find grounds for convergence. The unity of the church is essential to serving one Lord, proclaiming one Gospel and sharing the bread and the cup.

Thesis

Firstly, the biblical conception of salvation is wholistic. There is no dichotomy between personal and social, "this worldly" and "other worldly," horizontal and vertical. Therefore, the evangelical and the ecumenical understanding of salvation in mission is biblically unsound.

Secondly, there are good signs that both circles are in the process of discovering the wholistic concept of salvation. On the basis of the biblical understanding of salvation, there is possibility of convergence of both sides for the whole mission of the church.

Definition of the Terms

Ecumenicals A group of Christians who support the World Council of Churches' policy and mission program in the world. The World Council of Churches' policy often summoned the Christian to active participation and involvement in the radical social change.

Evangelicals A group of Christians who think the

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World Council of Churches' mission policy is leaning toward secular humanism or is politically oriented. They identify themselves with the classical understanding of mission: primacy of the proclamation, conversion and church planting. For them evangelism is the primary and essential task of the Christian mission.

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Chapter II

TWO OPPOSING VIEWS OF SALVATION IN MISSION

In recent years the whole idea of mission has undergone a crisis. The classical conception of mission as the visible expansion of the church for the salvation of men has sharply declined. As Carl Braaten has said: "The command of Jesus to preach the gospel of salvation to all nations is regarded by many as an outmoded religious zeal."[1] Where preaching, baptizing, and the establishment of new churches for the salvation of men were once seen as the primary goal of mission, these today tend to be regarded in ecumenicals circles as secondary matters, almost to the point of indifference.[2] The ecumenicals question whether we have any right to seek to make people Christians in terms of conversion or in terms of bringing them to a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. This raises the question of what indeed is the ecumenical understanding of salvation and mission?

A. THE ECUMENICAL UNDERSTANDING OF SALVATION IN MISSION

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[1] Carl E. Braaten, "The Christian Mission and American Imperialism," Dialog, XV(Winter 1976), 70.

[2] John Macquarrie, The Faith of the People of God (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972), p. 145.

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1. Uppsala 1968

Since the World War II, the church finds itself in pluralistic society, that is, a society in which people and groups of various faiths and ideologies must live together. The influential motto of the ecumenical movement prior to the sixties had been "let the Church be the Church!"[3]

A leading theologian in this respect was Dietrich Bonhoeffer. His emphasis on the church as the servant of the world was regarded in many circles as a prime model and was followed by many people. "The Church is the Church only when it exists for other... The Church must share in the secular problems of ordinary human life, not dominating, but helping and serving."[4] The influence of Bonhoeffer's theology led to a postitive evaluation of the world. God is at work in the world also, not in the church alone. Thus the theology of secularization was accepted positively. Other influential theologians of secularization are Gibson Winter and Harvey Cox. Defining salvation as humanization, Winter asserts.

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[3]Johannes Aagaard, "Trends in Missiological Thinking During the Sixties," International Review of Mission, LXII(January 1973), 9.

[4]Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Letters and Papers from Prison(New York: Macmillan, 1967), p. 203.

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> Secularization recognizes history and its problem of meaning as the sphere of man's struggle for salvation ...The categories of biblical faith are freed from their miraculous and supernatural garments...Why are men not simply called to be human in their historical obligations, for this is man's true end and his salvation? 5

The theology of revolution of Richard Shaull and others has also influenced the ecumenical understanding of salvation and mission. In his article, "Toward a Reformulation of Objectives", Shaull proposes a socio-political involvement as a goal of mission. He further writes that "the nature and goals of the Christian mission must be redefined from time to time in order to keep us with what is going on."[6] For Shaull it is more true to Christian faith to forsake the traditional understanding of mission and salvation. He sees the local churches "as small ghetto communities" isolated from the major frontiers of the human struggle in the countries in which they have been established. So Christian involvement in political revolution brings salvation.

The change of emphasis from the Church to the world was not only in Protestantism -- through the Geneva Conference on Church and Society(1966) and the World Council of

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[5]Gibson Winter, The New Creation as Metropolis (New York: Macmillan, 1963), pp. 60-61.

[6]Richard Shaull, "Toward a Reformulation of Objectives" in Norman A. Horner(ed.) Protestant Crosscurrents in Mission(Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968), p. 96.

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Churches Uppsala Assembly in 1968 -- but also in Roman Catholic theology through the Second Vatican Council 1962-65.

The full development of these movements was reflected in the preparatory statement for the World Council of Churches' 4th Assembly at Uppsala in 1968. There mission was defined as humanization and salvation as social justice. The role of Hoekendijk's shalom theology is also clearly discernable in the report.

> We have lifted up humanization as the goal of mission because we believe that more than others it communicates in or period of history the meaning of the messianic goal. In another time the goal of God's redemptive work might best have been described in terms of man turning towards God... The fundamental question was that of the true God, and the church responded to that question to him. It was assuming that the purpose of mission was Christianization, bringing man to God through Christ and his church. Today the fundamental question is much more that of true man, and the dominant concern of missionary congregation must therefore be to point to the humanity in Christ as the goal of mission. 7

This new emphasis on the humanizing of man and the community as the purpose of missions leads to the church's socio-political involvement as part of the church's task.

Mission was also defined as "missio Dei". God is seen as the missionary, the saving God who manifests himself today in human history. So the mission of the church is the acknowledgement of God's activities in the world. The

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[7]World Council of Churches, The Church for Others (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1968), p. 78

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church is seen as an instrument for that mission. The same report says:

> The God of the Bible is a sending God--he sends his prophets; he sends his Son; he sends his Spirit through the Son; he sends the apostles through the Son and by the Spirit. But the context of his sending is always history, since it is his concern to be present in the actual life situation of every man. Participation in God's mission is therefore entering into partnership with God in history, because our knowledge of God in Christ compels us to affirm that God is working out his purpose in the midst of the world and its historical processes... The mission of God(missio Dei) is to be distinguished from missions. As our present missions have sprung up as historically determined answers of the churches to challenges in the past, they may be understood as transitory forms of obedience to the missio Dei. 8

Thus christians are summoned to involve themselves in actual history, ever ready to meet new challenges, and confident that history is the locus of the divine mission.[9]

The positive evaluation of the world, of history and of men leads to a positive attitude towards non-Christian religions. The idea of a new humanity in Christ became the basis for dialogue on the equal basis between Christians, Marxists, humanists, and men of other faiths. Also in Roman Catholics along the line of Vatican II, Hans Kung said, "if we look at God's plan of salvation there is no inside and outside(of church), for God desires all men to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth."[10] Thus in ecumenical

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[8] Ibid., pp. 13-14

[9] J.G. Davies, Worship and Mission(London: SCM Press, 1966), p. 106f.

[10] Aagaard, p. 19.

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theology "the motivation for mission can neither be 'conversio gentium' nor 'plantatio ecclesiae'...(Rather) the mission of the Church consists in service to the world."[11] So in ecumenical circles, salvation came to be understood as humanization, shalom, and social justice. Radicalization of the ecumenical understanding of salvation in mission can be found in "liberation theology."

2. Salvation in Liberation Theology

a. The Development of Liberation Theology At the conclusion of the Vatican Council in 1965, the bishops adopted a pastoral constitution on "The Church and the World" that committed the church to further engagement in the struggle for social justice on behalf of the oppressed peoples of the world. At Geneva in 1966, the World Conference on Church and Society of the World Council of Churches on "Christians in the Technical and Social Revolutions of Our Time" made explicit commitment to join with forces working for a radical restructuring of oppressive systems. This concern were further reflected at a conference in Beirut in 1968, the first ever sponsored jointly by Roman Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox churches. At the Uppsala Assembly of W.C.C. in 1968, the recommendations of both the Geneva and Beirut conferences were firmly adopted as W.C.C.'s

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[11] Ibid., p. 19

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policy.[12]

The Catholic bishops of Latin America assembled in Medellin, Colombia 1968. According to Manfred Bahamann, "it was there that Latin American theology was born. The assembled bishops felt called to the task of being artisans of a new humanity."[13] They did not ignore the tragic realities of anguish, frustration, injustice and alienation in Latin America continent. They saw their moment in history as the beginning of a new epoch.

> It is the moment to exercise creativity and imagination in inventing the action that must be performed and brought to terms with the boldness of the Holy Spirit and the balance of God.... Latin America is obviously under the sign of transformation and development; a transformation that, besides taking place with extraordinary speed, has come to touch and influence every level of human activity, from economic to the religious. This indicates that we are on the threshold of a new epoch in the history of our continent. It appears to be a time full of zeal for full emancipation, of liberation from every form of servitude, of personal maturity and of collective integration. In these signs we perceive the first indications of the painful birth of a new civilization [14]

The Medellin Conference was a breakthrough. Since then, Latin American theology of liberation has come into prominence through the works of Gustavo Gutierrez,

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[12]Robert McAfee Brown, "From Detroit to Nairobi Beyond", Radical Religion, II: 4(March 1976), 45-48.

[13]Manfred K. Bahamann, "Liberation Theology--Latin American Style", Lutheran Quarterly, XXVII(May 1975), 139-148.

[14]The Medllin Documents, Vol. II, in "Introduction to the Final Documents", 3 & 4, as cited in Ibid., p. 144.

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Juan Luis Segundo, Rubem Alves, Jose Miguz Bonino, Hugo Assman and many others.

Liberation theology can be classified into three types. The first type comes out of the third world, especially from the Latin American context as we have seen. The second and third types emerged within the United States. The second type being black liberation theology. And the third type belongs to the movement of women's liberation. All these theologies of liberation agree basically with the understanding of the gospel as liberation which was brought by Jesus Christ the liberator.

> Differences among each type are mainly caused by what one concretly understands by the oppression and liberation. The first type understands these socio-politically and stresses liberation from the capitalistic colonialistic oppression. The second type understands these ethnically and stresses liberation from oppression based upon racism. The third type understands these in terms of sexuality and stresses liberation from the male dominance. 15

Liberation theology is now the most influential theology among the ecumenical circles. Particularly Latin American liberation theology as the champion of Third world theology is very prominent.

We shall now study Gustavo Gutierrez's understanding of salvation and mission. He is regarded as the most syste-

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15 Yoshinobu Kumazawa, "Asian Theological Reflections on Liberation," in The North East Asia Journal of Theology (March 1975), p.2.

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matic and called the dean of Latin American theologians.[16]

b. Gustavo Gutierrez's Understanding of Salvation in Mission Gutierrez thinks that the theme of salvation is one of the most neglected areas in contemporary theology. Although it is a concept central to the Christian mystery, it has been taken for granted that it is understood. He further believes that the hour has arrived to review critically the notion of salvation.

1) Definition of Salvation In Gutierrez's thought "salvation -- the communion of men with God and the communion of men among themselves -- is something which embraces all human reality, transforms it, and leads it to its fullness in Christ."[17]

2) Universality of Salvation Gutierrez first recalls us from a quantitative to a qualitative view of salvation, from the extensive to intensive approach. And this move is supported by developments in biblical scholarship which refuse to distinguish between sacred and profane history. History is one and also moves towards a better future.

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[16]Robert T. Osborn, "The Rise and Fall of the Bible in Recent American Theology," Duke Divinity School Review, XLI(Spring 1976), p. 69.

[17]Gustavo Gutierrez, A Theology of Liberation(Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1973), p. 151.

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The quantitative and extensive aspects of salvation deal with "the number of persons saved, the possibility of being saved, and the role which the Church plays in this process."[18] On a qualitative and intensive view, "man is saved if he opens himself to God and to others, even if he is not clearly aware that he is doing so. This is valid for Christians and non-Christians alike-- for all people."[19] The qualitative and and intensive approach to salvation has been influenced by the notion of universality of salvation which "leads to the question of the intensity of the presence of the Lord and therefore of the religious significance of man's action in history."[20]

Gutierrez holds that acceptance of communion with God happens although men "do not explicitly confess Christ as their Lord" in so far as they "renounce their selfishness, and seek to create an authentic brotherhood among men." On the other hand, the rejection of communion with God happens "in so far as they turn away from the building up of this world, do not open themselves to others and culpably withdraw into themselves."[21]

3) Salvation as Liberation The qualitative and intensive approach to salvation is grounded on the biblical

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[18] Ibid., p. 150. [19] Ibid., p. 151.

[20] Ibid., p. 152. [21] Ibid., p. 151.

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link between creation and salvation. This link is "based on the historical and liberating experience of Exodus."[22] Creation is seen as the first salvific act. It is the beginning of history and thus opening up of "the human struggle, and the salvific adventure of Yahweh."[23] Following von Rad, creation does not stand in the mythological past, but it is "regarded as a work of Yahweh in history, a work within time." Furthermore, creation is almost identified with the act of Yahweh which freed Israel from slavery in Egypt. He quotes from the Second Isaiah:

> Awake, awake, put on your strength, O arms of the Lord, awake as you did long ago, in days gone by. Was it not you who hacked the Rahab in pieces and ran the dragon through? Was it not you who dried up the sea, the waters of the great abyss, and made the ocean depths a path for the ransomed?(51: 9-10) 24

In these passages, Gutierrez points out that the words and images refer simultaneously to the creation and the Exodus. "Rahab" symbolizes Egypt and the chaos that was overcome by Yaweh in creation; "the waters of the great abyss" points to the waters that enveloped the world before creation and to the Red Sea which the Israelites had to cross during the Exodus event. "Creation and liberation from Egypt are but one salvific act."[25] The Exodus is a political event, in

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[22] Ibid., p. 153.
[23] Ibid., p. 154.
[24] Ibid., p. 155.
[25] Ibid.

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which Israel is liberated from the bondage of oppression. Accordingly, salvation must be understood in terms of political liberation.

> The liberation of Israel is a political action. It is the breaking away from a situation of despoliation and misery and the beginning of the construction of a just and fraternal society. It is the suppression of disorder and the creation of a new order. 26.

With the Exodus, a new age which is characterized by redemption and freedom has arrived for humanity. For Gutierrez, the "work of Christ forms a part of this movement and brings it to complete fulfillment. The redemptive action of Christ, the foundation of all that exists, is also conceived as a recreation and presented in a context of creation(cf. Col. 1:15-20; I Cor. 8:6; Heb. 1:2; Eph. 1:1-11)."[27] Creation acquires its full meaning through this "new creation" which Christ gives to all men(cf. Rom. 8).

By his death and resurrection, Christ liberates man from sin and all its consequences. "This liberation fulfills in an unexpected way the promises of the prophets and creates a new chosen people, which this time includes all humanity."[28] All things have been created in Christ, all things have been saved in him(cf. 1:15-20). Therefore, cre-

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., p. 158.

[28] Ibid.

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ation and salvation must be understood Christologically. So the paradigm of the liberation of man found in the Exodus experience finds its definite fulfillment in Christ."[29] Christ is Liberator. He liberates and this liberation may not be reduced to being merely a religious liberation. It must include every level of human liberation and existence. "In Christ the all-comprehensiveness of the liberating process reaches its fullest sense."[30]

4) The Importance of Praxis for Salvation Salvation, understood as the "communion of men with God and the communion of men among themselves" leads to the question of the religious significance of man's action in history for the transformation and fulfillment of the present life. As the crown and center of creation, man is called to participate in the building of society. "By working, transforming the world, breaking out of servitude, building a just society, and assuming his destiny in history, man forges himself."[31] In this sense, salvation must be understood as "the inner force and the fullness of this movement of man's self-generation which was inititated by the work of creation."[32]

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[29]Orlando E. Costas, The Church and Its Mission (Wheaton: Tyndale, 1974), p. 234.

[30]Gutierrez, p. 178. [31]Ibid., p. 159.

[32]Ibid., p.

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Man becomes an authentic person by participating in the salvific process which is the building of a just, peaceful, and fraternal human society. The struggle against misery, exploitation and the building of a just society is part of the saving action. Thus the building of the "temporal city is not simply a stage of 'humanization' or 'pre-evangelization' as was held in theology up until a few years ago. Rather it is to become part of a saving process which embraces the whole of man and all human history."[33] Temporal progress and the liberation of man are correlated with the growth of God's kingdom. "The growth of the Kingdom is a process which occurs historically in liberation, in so far as liberation means a greater fulfillment of man.[34] For Gutierrez, the elimination of misery and exploitation is a sign of the coming of the Kingdom. "The struggle for justice, rightly asserts Dom Antonio Fragoso, is also the struggle for the Kingdom of God."[35] The fundamental obstacle to the Kingdom and to man's reaching salvation is sin. It is a breach of communion with God and communion of men among themselves. Sin is not considered as an individual responsibility but as collective sin.

> But in the liberation approach sin is not considered as an individual, private, or merely interior reality--

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[33]Ibid., p. 159-160. [34]Ibid., p. 177.

[35]Ibid., p. 168.

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> asserted just enough to necessitate a "spiritual" redemption which does not challenge the order in which we live. Sin is regarded as a social, historical fact, the absence of brotherhood and love in relationships among men, the breach of friendship with God and with other men, and therefore, an interior, personal fracture. 36

Therefore, according to Gutierrez, collective sin requires a political liberation.

In the incarnation, God Himself became man and lived with men. Consequently, God is to be found among men. We meet Him "in our encounter with men; we encounter Him in the commitment to the historical process of mankind."[37] Thus, when we despise our neighbor, we despise God.(Prov. 14:21); to explit the poor workers and delay the payment of wages is to offend God. "Inversely, to know, that is to say, to love Yahweh is to do justice to the poor and the oppressed... Where there is justice and righteousness, there is knowledge of Yahweh; when these are lacking, it is absent."[38]

Gutierrez enters into an extensive and challenging exegesis of the parable of the final judgment in Matthew 25. For him it points out that God is loved in the neighbor and that this love is a love which "acts", does not simply "know". The neighbor is not only an individual person. It refers also to man in his social, economic, cul-

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[36] Ibid., p. 175.

[37] Ibid., p. 194.

[38] Ibid.

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tural, and racial relationships. Likewise it refers to the "exploited social class, the dominated people, and the marginated race." Thus our love or charity to our neighbors is a "political charity". "Indeed, to offer food and drink in our day is a political actions."[39] It means the transformation of a society structured to benefit a few at the expense of the majority. So Gutierrez insists upon the necessity of establishing a relationship between faith and political action.

There is a dialectical tension between the "now" and "not yet" of the Kingdom. The Kingdom must not be confused with the establishment of a just society, although it is not indifferent to this society. The establishment of a just society constitutes a necessary condition for the arrival of the Kingdom. At the same time "the announcement of the Kingdom reveals to society itself the aspiration for a just society and leads it to discover unsuspected dimensions and unexplored paths. The Kingdom is realized in a society of brotherhood and justice; and, in turn this realization opens up the promise and hope of complete communion of all men with God. For Gutierrez, the Kingdom is always ahead, and keeps us from absolutizing any one historical stage, any revolution, or any human achievement.

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[39] Ibid., p. 202.

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And it is the Christian hope that makes us radically "free to commit ourselves to social praxis, motivated by a liberating utopia and with the means which the scientific analysis of reality provides for us."[40] Through the praxis of the future hope today, the Kingdom and salvation, can become a present reality.

5) The Importance of Life on Earth for Salvation

For Gutierrez, "human history is in truth nothing but the history of the slow, uncertain, and surprising fulfillment of the Promise."[41] The Promise is the efficacious revelation of God's love and his self-communication. It orients all history towards the eschatological future. The promise was first made to Abraham that he and his posterity would be "the heirs of the world" (Rom. 4:13) and is fulfilled in Christ, the Lord of history and of the cosmos. The Promise unfolds in the promises made by God throughout history. The Covenant, the kingdom of Israel, the New Covenant, and the resurrection are the expression and realization of the Promise through promises.

According to one of the classic hermeneutical principles in the Christian circle, the promises in the Old Testament are on the"temporal" and "earthly level", so they

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[40] Ibid., p. 238.

[41] Ibid., p. 160.

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have to be translated to the "spiritual level" of the New Testament. However, Gutierrez holds that the distinction between "temporal" redemption and "spiritual" redemption comes from Western dualistic thought(matter-spirit) foreign to the biblical mentality. And this dichotomic of thought is also increasingly foreign to contemporary mentality. "Christ does not 'spiritualize' the eschatological promises; he gives them meaning and fulfillment today(cf. Luke 4:21)."[42]

These eschatological promises are revealed and fulfilled through material, temporal, earthly, social and material realities. In the past, a distorted understanding of spiritualization has often made us forget the human consequences of the eschatological promises, consequently the power to transform unjust social structure. Rather, the eschatological promises urges our historical commitment here and now for the betterment of life on earth.[43]

6) The Church as the Sacrament of Salvation Following Vatican II, Gutierrez sees the church as a sacrament of salvation. Accordingly, the church should cease considering itself as the exclusive place of salvation or to save men in the sense of "guaranteeing heaven". For Gutierrez, the church as a sacramental community must be a visible sign

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[42] Ibid., p.167.

[43] Ibid., p. 165.

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of the presence of the Lord in the midst of the struggle for justice and liberation.

The church's task in the world is celebration, denunciation and annunciation. By celebrating the Eucharist the Christian community commemorates the salvific action of Christ in history and signifies the creation of human brotherhood. The significance of the Eucharist is reported by many biblical accounts. As a meal, it signifies community and brotherhood so that the Gospel of John could replace it with the washing of the feet as a symbol of service of one's fellow man. As a Passover meal, it recalls the political liberation of Israel. As a memorial of the death and resurrection of Jesus it commemorates the liberation of man from sin. In the Gospels and for Paul, the condition for its genuine celebration is fraternal charity and communual unity. Consequently, when the community genuinely celebrates the Eucharist it realizes itself as the sacrament or sign of salvation.

Another task of the church is to make the "prophetic denunciation of every dehumanizing situation, which is contrary to brotherhood, justice, and liberty. At the same time it must criticize every sacralization of oppressive structures."[44] The denunciation represents the necessary

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[44] Ibid., p. 267.

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The denunciation represents the necessary confrontation that must take place wherever the gospel is proclaimed. Thus, denunciation "is achieved by confronting a given situation with the reality which is announced"[45], namely, the reality which is proclaimed in the gospel. The gospel is the good news of the presence of God's love "in the historical becoming of mankind." and the gospel message reveals what is at the root of social injustice and the rupture of brotherhood. So to be a sacrament of history, the church must preach the Good News about the coming of the Kingdom. The annunciation of the gospel has a conscienticizing or a politicizing function. This conscienticizing dimension of the preaching of the gospel should lead the church into a profound revision of pastoral activity.

7) Evangelicals' Criticism of Gutierrez's Concept Salvation According to Gutierrez's universalistic framework, men can be saved in so far as they renounce their selfishness, and seek to create an authentic brotherhood among men. So the "unevangelized do not need to hear the gospel because they open themselves to God apart from it.[46] For the evangelicals, even though salvation is meant for all men, each person must appropriate it to become effective

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[45] Ibid., p. 268.

[46] Clark H. Pinnock, "Liberation Theology: The Gains, The Gaps," Christianity Today, XX: 8(January 16, 1976),14

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for him.

Also for Guiterrez, the building of a just, peaceful, and fraternal human society is a salvific process and the struggle against misery and exploitation is part of a saving action. Evangelicals believe that in liberation theology salvation becomes a process which is only partially dependent on God's grace. Man thus 'earns' his salvation in part through his work.[47] According to Gutierrez, God is to be found in every man through Incarnation. So Christ is in every neighbor. However, evangelicals found in Gutierrez the relativizing of sinsfulness of man. Evangelicals believe also that salvation and mission in liberation theology is described exclusively in terms of political liberation. Accordingly, one cannot find any appreciation of the "Church's role as the proclaimer of the unsearchable richness of Jesus."[48]

B. EVANGELICALS' UNDERSTANDING OF SALVATION IN MISSION

The new understanding of salvation as humanization and liberation in ecumenical circles provoked a reaction from the evangelicals who adhered to the classical understanding of mission. They saw in it a betrayal of the proper mission of the church. The relationship between ecumenicals and evangelicals has gradually deteriorated, especially

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[47]Costas, p. 256.

[48]Pinnock, p. 15.

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after the evangelicals began organising their own conferences on mission(Wheaton and Berlin in 1966, Frankfurt in 1970, and Lausanne in 1974).[49]

Strong reaction against the preparatory statement for the WCC's Uppsala Assembly came from the evangelical circles. Donald A. McGavran of the Fuller School of World Mission in Pasadena, California wrote an open letter "Will Uppsala betray the two billion?"[50] shortly before the Uppsala Assembly. In it he charges that Uppsala's preparatory documents do not say a word about the church's calling to bring the gospel of eternal salvation to the two thousand million non-Christians in the world. He says that "scarcely has mission appeared to be the business of the whole church than the church has begun to subvert the mission to her own service." An European evangelical Peter Beyerhaus, professor of missiology at the University of Tubingen, also spoke out against the Uppsala documents after the Uppsala Assembly. According to Peter Beyerhaus, Uppsala was "nothing less than the bankruptcy of responsible missionary theology."[51]

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[49]W. Bryant Hicks, "Confrontation in Christian Missions," Review and Expositor, LXXI (Summer 1974), 390.

[50]Donald A. McGavran, Eye of the Storm(Waco: Word Books, 1972), pp. 233.

[51]Peter Beyerhaus, Shaken Foundations(Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972), p. 60.

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1. Mission as Evangelism

Traditionally, evangelicals understand that the gospel speaks to individuals, so faith and salvation are appropriated by personal decision in response to the preached word.[52] Billy Graham is one of the best known evangelicals who believe that the primary mission of the church is evangelism, the goal of which is the personal salvation of individual souls. "Evangelism and the salvation of the soul is the vital mission of the church."[53] For Graham, salvation means the justification and regeneration of individuals. Regenerated persons have an indirect influence on society, but social action undertaken by Christians is entirely distinct from evangelism which is their primary mission.[54]

So for the evangelicals personal salvation through evangelism is the primary mission of the church. Humanization, social justice or liberation is the by-products of evangelism.

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[52] Leander E. Keck, "Evangelism in the Theological Perspective", in James T. Laney(ed.) Evangelism(New York: Hawthorne, 1975), p. 38.

[53] Billy Graham, "Why Lausanne?" in J.D. Douglass (ed.) Let The Earth Hear His Voice(Minneapolis: World Wide, 1975), p. 31.

[54] Ronald J. Sider, "Evangelism, Salvation and Social Justice" International Review of Mission, LXIV(July 1975), 252.

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2. Mission as Church Planting

One of the evangelicals view of the Christian mission can be called a "church-centered" approach. The basic principle of this theory is that salvation always goes forth from the church into the world, like a line from a boat into the water, catching fish and then hauling them in. In this view the aim of mission is to get new members and make them grow.[55] Recently Donald A. McGavran has become a prominent advocates of this view. He says that "a chief and irreplaceable purpose of missions is church growth."[56] He seeks to persuade churchmen to pay as close attention to the growth of their churches as the supermarket manager checks whether or not his store is making a profit, and what kind of merchandise brings a return. He further states that "churches have financial audits but they don't often have membership audits. That's what we need, to discover where members come from and where they go."[57] So the church planting and conversion is one of the essential tasks of the mission of the church for evangelicals.

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[55] Braaten, p. 74.

[56] Donald A. McGavran, Understanding Church Growth (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), p. 32.

[57] Ibid., p. 43.

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3. Frankfurt Declaration

After the Uppsala Assembly, Peter Beyerhaus became a vocal champion for the evangelical understanding of salvation and mission. Under his leadership, fifteen German theologicans adopted the "Frankfurt Declaration" on the "Fundamental Crisis in Christian Mission" on March 1970. It's aim was to "affirm the biblical basis, content, and goal of mission."[58]

The Frankfurt Declaration speaks of seven indispensable basic elements of mission.

(1) the basis of mission is to be found only in the command of the risen Christ. "We therefore oppose the current tendency to determine the nature and task of mission by socio-political analysis of our time and from the demands of the non-Christian world;

(2) The main purpose of mission is glorification of God, not humanization. Humanization is rather a product of our new birth through God's saving activity in Christ within us, or an indirect result of the Christian proclamation in its power to perform a leavening activity in the course of world history;

(3) There is no salvation apart from Jesus Christ. "We therefore oppose the false teaching (which is spreading in the ecumenical movements...) that Christ Himself is

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[58] Beyerhaus, p. 68

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anonymously so evident in world religions, historical changes, and revolutions that man can encounter him and find salvation in him without the direct news of the gospel";

(4) Mission is the witness and presentation of eternal salvation performed in the name of Jesus by his church. This salvation is due to the sacrificial crucifixion of Jesus Christ, which occured once for all and for all mankind. The appropriation of this salvation to individuals takes place first, however, through proclamation, which calls for decision, and through baptism, which places the believer in the service of love. "We therefore oppose the universalistic idea that in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ all men of all times are already born again and already have peace with him, irrespective of their knowledge of the historical saving activity of God or belief in it."

(5) The primary visible task of mission is to call out the messianic, saved community from among all people. "We further oppose the one-sided emphasis on salvation which stresses only this world, according to which the Church and the world together share in a future, purely social, reconciliation of all mankind. That would lead to the self-dissolution of the church."

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(6) The office of salvation is for all men, but the adherents of non-Christian religions only share in that salvation through faith, conversion and baptism.

(7) The Church is engaged in mission until Christ comes again. The identification of messianic salvation with progress, development, and social change should be refuted. The fatal consequence of this is that efforts to aid development and revolutionary involvement in the places of tension in society are seen as the contemporary forms of Christian mission. Our priority in mission is rather the reconciliation with God through faith in the Gospel.[59]

The Frankfurt Declaration had a tremendous poliarizing effect on the churches around the world. Many evangelicals in America including Donald A. MaGavran and in other countries received it with great enthusiasm.

As we have seen, the evangelicals are extremely critical of the ecumenical understanding of salvation as a process of humanization and liberation within the horizon of this world. They still believe that the primary task of mission is evangelism, leading to conversion and eternal salvation. They stress this as the prior, if not only,

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[59]Peter Beyerhaus, Missions: Which Way? Humanization or Redemption(Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), pp. 97-120. In Chapter VI, the full text and the introduction can be found.

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concern of the church in mission. The social dimensions of mission stressed by the ecumenical are only indirectly the concern of evangelism and mission, namely, the ethical by-products of Christians who live their faith in the world.

4. Criticism from the Evangelicals

Salvation in the evangelicals has often been conceived of as individual salvation and thus a private possession. Often the church as the community of saved souls, has been thought of as a gathering of those who have their ticket to heaven. So salvation becomes other-worldly, and the more souls saved from this world for the next, the more people tend to acquiesce to the status quo.

Ecumenicals also believe that social justice is not a by-product of salvation. Rather, salvation means transformation from a self-centered life to an other-centered life. The evangelical differentiation of evangelism from social justice is an illegitimate dichotomy and against the wholeness of the gospel. The evangelical church planting and growth as the primary goal of mission is based on the assumption that the church is the dispensory of saving grace to all those who will receive it. The kingdom of God comes to history by means of church growth. For the ecumenicals, the church is a sign of salvation proclaiming and interpreting what God is doing in the world.

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C. SUMMARY

In this chapter, we have studied the ecumenical and evangelical understanding of mission and salvation. Their different positions have brought a growing polarization and confrontation within the Christian church. In the following chapter, we shall study the biblical concept of salvation for further insight into understanding the mission of the church. It is our hope that the biblical understanding of salvation will bring both groups to a unified view of the mission of the church.

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Chapter III

THE BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF SALVATION

A. THE OLD TESTAMENT CONCEPT OF SALVATION

The Old Testament concept of salvation is derived primarily from the historical Exodus experience through which God had miraculously delivered the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt. The flight from Egypt and the ultimate entry into the Promised Land formed the core of the concept of salvation. The principal Hebrew root word in the Old Testament with the meaning "to save" is y-š-ʿ. It is found in the corresponding verb and in the noun forms yešá, yᵉšuá and tesua. The root ישׁע has the meaning "to be broad", "to become spacious", "to enlarge", and does carries the sense of "deliverance."[1]

1. Salvation in the Pentateuch and Historical Writings In the Pentateuch, the verb ישׁע appears only a few instances (Exod. 14:30; Deut. 20:4, 33:29; Numbers 10:9). The noun yᵉšuá appears also rarely(Gen. 49:18; Exod. 15:9; Deut. 32:15). On the whole, the use of the verb "to save" for salvation of men by God in the older Pentateuchal tradition

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[1] F.J. Taylor, "Save, Salvation" in Alan Richardson (ed.) A Theological Word Book of the Bible(New York: Macmillan, 1962), p. 219.

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is quite limited. Other salvation terms like p-l-t meaning "to get away", "to bring to safety" and m-l-t which means "to escape", "to find safety" and ʿ-z-r which means "help" are very uncommon in the narrative of the Pentateuch. P-d-q which is rendered as "redeem" is used for substitution of a monetary payment for the commutation of an offering. Later p-d-q came to be used for the "redemption" of man, it was not yet used in the Pentateuch for the meaning of salvation except in Deuteronomy(9:26). g-ʾ-l which means to "redeem" carries the meaning of purchasing back from slavery or recovering property which had fallen into alien hands. In the prophetic writings, such as Deutro-Isaiah, or in the Psalter, the sense of a payment fades away and the word is used as synonym for "deliver", "save", pointing to the saving activity of God. The other commonly used salvation term is n-s-l which means "removing" cattles or riches or all sorts of things except men.[2]

Generally, the salvific action of God in the Pentateuch is not characterized by terms like "save," "deliver," or "salvation." Rather it is described by the "purely external or locomotive terms, such as 'he brought them out'(from Egypt)."[3] James Barr writes:

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[2]James Barr, "An Aspect of Salvation in the Old Testament" in Eric Sharpe & John Hinnells(eds.) Man and His Salvation(Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1973) pp. 41-43.

[3]Ibid., p. 44.

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> The paucity of explicit salvation terminology in the Pentateuch stands in some contrast with the well evidenced narrative themes suggesting some sort of salvation or deliverance. Noah and his immediate family are saved from the flood because they have been instructed to build the ark; Lot and his daughters escape the destruction of Sodom; Abraham and Sarah escape from several dangerous local potentates; by a divine intervention Issac is miraculously saved from impending sacrifice; Joseph is repeatedly preserved when on the point of disaster; and the people of Israel, deeply oppressed in Egypt, are delivered. [4]

The salvation terminologies also appear in the military narratives of the historical writings-- the wars of the Judges against the enemies of Israel, and to a lesser extent the later battles of the kings against the neighboring countries after the Conquest. They are often being used nontheologically in everyday life(Gen. 47:25; Exod. 1: 17-18; Josh. 6:25; I Sam. 23:5; II Sam. 19:5 and etc.).[5] In several passages of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, the word y sua or t sua is rendered as victory(II Sam. 19:2; 23:1, 12; I Sam. 19:5). And many of the difficult metaphors associated with salvation can also be understood in the context of war and deliverance in battle-- the tower of salvation(II Sam. 22:51), the horses or chariots of salvation(Hab. 3:8), the shield of salvation(II Sam. 22:36;

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[4] Ibid.

[5] Alan Richardson, "Salvation" in The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible(Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), IV, 170.

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Ps. 18:35), the horn or trumpet of salvation(II Sam. 22:3) and so on.[6] The Judges who acted as deliverers for Israel were called by the term "mosia", a participle of this same verb, meaning "deliverer" or "savior. However, it is God who sends the "savior"(Gen. 45:7; Judg. 3:9,15; II Kings 13 :5; Neh. 9:27) and who empowers these human saviors to perform their mighty deeds of deliverance(Judg. 6:15-16). So even though "save" and its cognate be used secularly or nontheologically, the implication is always that it is God who has wrought the deliverance.

2. Salvation in the Psalms and Prophetic Literature The full development of salvation language appears in the Psalm rather than in the Pentateuch and in the historical writings. In Psalm the stem ישׁע is used almost 80 times for the help of Yahweh against the adversaries. Generally in the Psalms the situational reports of particular deliverances are now rather uncommon. Rather, "the situations are recurrent; they do not apply to anyone at one time or another. This universalization of the situation is a reason for the use of general salvation terminology."[8]

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[6]Paul Verghese, "Salvation: The Meaning of a Biblical Word," International Review of Missions, LVII(October 1968), 401.

[7]Georg Fohrer, "σώζω" in Gerhard Kittel(ed.) Theological Dictionary of the New Testament(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), VII, p. 976.

[8]Barr, p. 49.

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In the Psalms, Israel is struggling to perceive the meaning of her suffering. In her weakness Israel cries out to God for salvation. There are confession of sin(51, 130 etc.) and recognitions that Israel's suffering is the result of her disobedience(78, 106 etc.). But at the same time there are vigorous defense of her innoncence(18, 31). However, the Psalmists know themselves well to be unrighteous. And "perhaps most remarkable of all is the way in which concern for the salvation of Israel mingles with a profound solidarity with the poor and oppressed of the whole earth (67)."[9]

While salvation in the Old Testament may begin with deliverance from a physical enemy, it does not end there. In certain passages in the Psalms and prophetic writings, salvation is closely associated with righteousness. "The terms become virtually synonymous, for they both denote the same outgoing quality of the divine character."[10]

> My mouth will tell of thy righteous acts, of they deeds of salvation all the day. (Psalm 71:15)
>
> He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness.(Isaiah 61:10)

The salvation of Israel is not based on her righteousness,

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[9]Charles C. West, "Salvation: Divine and Human" Princeton Seminary Bulletin, LXIV(March 1971), p. 18.

[10]Alan Richarson, p. 173.

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but she is saved by the righteousness of God. This is what is meant by the declaration that Yahweh is a "righteous God and a Saviour(Isaiah 45:21)."[11]

The eight century prophets warned against the Israelites for their false hopes, false security and false salvation through international alliances. They further denounced the common Israelites' belief that Yahweh must fight for His people.[12] In line with the classical prophecy of the eight century, B.C., the seventh century B.C. prophet Jeremiah in his famous temple address that even the temple itself has no security to offer(Jer. 7:1-15).[13] It is in Jeremiah's time that the conquest of the foreign nations is carried to its furthest point in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. But just from this point onwards, the seven century B.C. prophets begin to proclaim an increasingly positive expectation of salvation for Israel. The God of Israel will vindicate after all the hopes and expectations of His people and Jahweh is to give His people a new heart to know Him.(Jer. 24:7)[14] Deutro-Isaiah, optimistic over the prospect of return from exile in Babylon, sees God both as creator of the earth and its deliverer.

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[11] Ibid.

[12] Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology(New York: Harper & Row, 1965), II, 147.

[13] Ibid., II, 197.

[14] Ibid., II, 212.

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In Deutro-Isaiah "to create" and "to redeem"(ברא)can be used as entirely synonymous.[15] According to Alan Richardson:

> Deuto-Isaiah thinks of the creation of the world as an act of divine salvation which was the type of the redemption of Israel from Egypt and also of the deliverance of God's people from the Babylonian captivity in his own day. The Creator-Saviour, who defeated chaos and established the world by a new act of creation redeemed Israel from Egypt at the miracle of the Red Sea(cf. Exod. 15:1-12; Pss. 77:11-20; 114; etc.); now Yahweh was redeeming them again by a new act of creation-salvation, so that the ransomed of Yahweh should return(from Babylon) and come with singing to Zion. [16]

Thus creation is renewed in redemption, and salvation is thought of as new creation.

However, with the despair on the hope of a renewed Israel, the concept of salvation becomes more eschatological. When the work of the Old Testament prophets is done, the concept of salvation has become thoroughly eschatological. "Salvation is that which will be established for all the earth on the day of new creation, the Great Day of Yahweh; in that day 'all flesh' shall come and worship him(Isaiah 66:22-23)."[17]

3. <u>Salvation in the Later Books: Apocrypha and the Pseudepigrapha</u> Eschatological salvation is more transcendentally apparent in the later apocalyptic Judaism.[18] In contrast to

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[15]Ibid.

[16]Richardson, p. 174.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Rad, II, 241.

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the universal salvation for all nations (cf. Isaiah 45:22), the later books of the Old Testament show the idea that Israel could expect final salvation but the pagan nations which have oppressed Israel must face final perdition(Wis. 5:2; Joel 3:5; Dan. 12:2). This particularization of salvation appears even more strangely in the non-canonical books of Judaism, e.g. Jubilees, Psalms of Solomon, Enoch.[19]

4. Summary As we have seen above, salvation in the Old Testament is based upon Israel's historical experience of deliverance from Egypt in the Exodus. The flight from Egyptian bondage, the miracle of the Red Sea, the subsequent experience of God's fatherly care in the wilderness, and the ultimate entry into the Promised Land constituted the determinate experience of salvation for Israel.

> We have heard our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what deeds thou didst perform in their days, in the days of old(Ps. 44:1; cf. Pss 78:105-6; 114; 135-36; Exod. 12:1-2; Deut. 6:20-24). [20]

According to prophetic teachings, God's saving action is a continuing redemption throughout the history of Israel, delivering Israel from Assyrian invasion or Babylonian exile. And it would be consummated in the final redemption of Israel at the end of the age. So salvation is primarily a present reality as well as eschatological.

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[19]Richardson, pp. 175-176.

[20]Taylor, p. 219.

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Salvation is also distinctively divine accomplishment: "deliverance belongs to the Lord"(Ps. 3:8; cf. 47:9, 62:11). Also the phrase "God saves" or "God is salvation" (I Sam. 14:39; I Chron. 16:35, Ps. 20:9, 68:20; Isa. 33:22) shows men's merits in achieving salvation is excluded.

Salvation in the Old Testament is communual. It is closely related in the basic understanding of man in corporate rather than individual terms. God's covenant was made with the Hebrew people not with an individual Hebrew. For the Israelites, the individual's identity and meaning can be found only by participation in the life of the clan, tribe, and nation. This picture is also vividly described in the prophecy of Deutro-Isaiah, the prophet of the exile in Babylon who foresaw the return of the Israelites to Jerusalem: "Behold, the Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your salvation comes'"(Isa. 62:11).[21] For Claus Westermann:

> When the Old Testament speaks of salvation, it generally means God's action towards the community, towards his people. Salvation then is not received at any particular time by an individual person. Rather, an individual participates in this healing action of God only so far as he belongs to the whole people of God. 22

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[21] James N. Lapsley, Salvation and Health(Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), p. 32.

[22] Claus Westermann, "Salvation and Healing in the Community: The Old Testament Understanding", International Review of Mission, LXI(1972), 17.

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However, within this overarching view, some aspects on the individual's needs and worth developed particularly in the Wisdom literature and some of the Psalms.[23]

Salvation in the Old Testament is primarily this worldly." It has to do with the fullness of life on earth -- not to an otherworldly existence in a time beyond time. The apocalyptic idea of "end-time" is not fundamentally a break with this idea, for the final battle between good and evil takes place within history.[24] The goal of salvation on earth is expressed by shalom. "Shalom" has a broad meaning which includes not only peace but also personal, familial, and social wholeness, well-being, and prosperity. "Shalom" is a particular stage of social existence. "It is a state of existence where the claims and needs of all that is are satisfied, where there is a relationship of communion between God and man and nature, where there is fulfillment for all creation.[25] However, even though salvation is primarily this worldly, it is not wholly realized on earth. It will be finally consummated at the End of the Age.

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[23]John Killinger, The Salvation Tree(New York: Harper & Row, 1973), pp. 1-7.

[24]Bernhard W. Anderson, Understanding the Old Testament(Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1966), p. 518.

[25]Jack Stotts, Shalom: The Search for a Peaceable City(Nashville: Abingdom Press, 1973), p. 98. Also see Letty M. Russell, Human Liberation in a Feminist Perspective -- A Theology(Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), pp. 104ff.

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B. SALVATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament claims that the salvation adumbrated in the Old Testament has been fulfilled by the coming of Jesus Christ. As in the Old Testament, salvation means God's saving action in history, by which He liberates His people from destruction and by which He assures them of the consummation of salvation at the end of the age. Therefore, the whole New Testament is a witness to the "power of God for salvation"(Rom. 1:16).[26]

In the New Testament the noun form σωτηρία is not commonly used; occuring only forty-three times, but the verb σώζω is more common. The words σώζω and σωτηρία are religious terms and are almost never applied to purely earthly conditions(special context, Acts 27:20, 31, 34). Even when it is used as healing from illness, as help in a storm on the lake or as deliverance from mortal danger, it points to God's help because of its connection with faith (Mark 5:23, 28; Mt. 8:25; 14:30).[27]

1. Salvation in the Synoptic Gospels

Salvation is seen as escape from the destruction of

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[26] Richardson, p. 177.

[27] Ingrid Maisch, "Salvation" in Karl Rahner(ed.) Sacramentum Mundi(New York: Herder & Herder, 1970) V, p. 410.

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the chaos to come, and is had by repentance and faith that Jesus is the true Messiah who comes to warn men of its coming and to save the righteous.

In the Gospels, the word "to save" and "salvation" refer both to an eschatological and to a present dimension.[28] Primarily salvation is an eschatological gift. And salvation is by the righteousness of God, not by man's own righteousness(Luke 18:10-14). In Jesus' answer to the rich young ruler about eternal life, salvation is synonymous with eternal life and entrance into the Kingdom of God in the age to come(Mark. 19:17-30)[29]

Eschatological salvation means deliverance from mortality and the restoration of communion with God. At the Kingdom of God, all the evils of physical sickness, and death will be swallowed up(Mt. 25:34, 46). The Gospel does not usually talk about the resurrection, but the saying in Luke 20:34-36 makes it clear that the eschatological salvation includes the whole man.[30] The most common picture for the perfected fellowship with God is the fellowship of the table or feast. "They will eat and drink at Jesus' table

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[28]W. Foerster, "σώζω," in Kittel, VII, 992.

[29]Hans Conzelmann, An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament(New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p. 113.

[30]E.M.Green, The Meaning of Salvation(Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965), p. 112.

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in the Kingdom of God"(Lk. 22:30, cf. Mk. 14:25; Mt. 8:11).[31]

Salvation in the synoptic gospels has a present dimension too. To Zaccheus, Jesus said, "Today salvation has come to this house...For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost"(Luke 19:9-10). The salvation Jesus brought to Zaccheus was a present gift, although its blessings reach into the future. The distinctive teaching of Jesus on salvation is that it is offered to sinners. But, the condition of it is repentance(Lk. 15:11-32; Mk. 2:17). So the salvation which Jesus is bringing is closely bound up with the forgiveness of sins.[32]

In Luke 4:18-19, Jesus defines his mission to save men as follows.

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

Here Jesus identifies several aspects of his mission to save men. Jesus does not equate the task of helping the oppressed with preaching the Gospel to the poor. Nor does he say one task is more important than another. They are both important and distinct. All of them are fundamental parts of his total saving ministry.

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[31]Günther Bornkamm, Jesus of Nazareth(New York: Harper & Row, 1969), p. 81.

[32]F.J. Taylor, p. 220.

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The presence of messianic salvation is seen in Jesus' miracles of healing. In some passages "to save" means "to heal"(Mark 5:23; Luke 8:36). Further in one instance σώζω appears to have been intended to have the double meaning "to save" and "to heal". The presence of the Kingdom of God in Jesus meant deliverance from hemorrhage(Mk. 5:34), blindness(Mk. 10:52), demon possession(Lk. 8:36), and even death itself(Mk. 5:23). Jesus claimed that these deliverances were evidences of the presence of the messianic salvation (Mt. 5:4-5). They were pledges of the life of the eschatological Kingdom that will finally mean immortality for the body. In the Gospels, demons are the emissaries of Satan who has invaded God's good creation and subjected it to his evil domain(Lk. 4:6; 22:53; John 12:31). The exorcism of Jesus shows that Christ is the conqueror of Satan. Thus his "victory" is a cosmic victory, involving the liberation of the whole creation from subjection to the evil 'powers' which have enslaved it."[33]

In summary, in the Synoptic Gospels there is no dichotomy between spiritual and physical, "this-worldly and "other-worldly". Salvation in Jesus affects the whole man. Man can be saved in this world by repentance of sin and

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[33]Richardson, p. 178

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faith in Jesus. But the present salvation will be fully consummated at the end of the age. Man cannot achieve salvation by his own righteousness. Salvation is the work of God through Jesus Christ. Salvation is to be appropriated by individual's faith, but the metaphor of the table fellowship at the Kingdom of God shows that salvation is both individual and social. Also salvation includes man and cosmos.

3. Salvation in Paul

For Paul, salvation does not develop out of the human resources or the world as the meaning or goal of world history. It is not a possibility immanent in man or in the world. Rather it breaks in from outside and thus remains God's salvation towards man.[34] "Salvation comes from God(Phil. 1:28) through the gospel(I Cor. 15:1-2) which speaks of Jesus Christ as 'crucified'(I Cor. 2:2) and as 'Lord' (II Cor. 4:5). The death and resurrection of Christ is thus the decisive salvation event in which God's power is operative."[35] So man is saved as he confesses that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead(Rom. 10:10-13). Paul understands the 'saving event' as the word.

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[34] Conzelmann, p. 201.

[35] Victor Paul Furnish, Theology and Ethics in Paul (Nashville: Abingdom Press, 1968), p. 122.

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And the preaching as the "word of the cross"(I Cor. 1:18) must be the present communication of salvation. Accordingly man obtains salvation as he hears the Gospel and believes that he is justified by faith rather than works(Rom. 1:16-17). The saving event as word in Pauline thought rejects any understanding of salvation along the lines of mystery religions.[37]

a. Salvation as Eschatological and Present Reality Paul is basically molded in his thinking by the expectation of the imminent consummation. The imminent end or the coming end event can be observed easily in Pauline epistles(Rom. 2:5; 5:9; 11:3,26; 13:11-12; I Cor. 3:13, 15; 7:29; 15:52; II Cor. 1:14; 4:14; Gal. 6:9; Phil. 1:6; 3:20; Col. 3:4 etc.).

> The Lord is at hand(Phil. 4:5).
>
> For salvation is nearer to us now than we first believed.(Rom. 13:11)

So Paul's concept of salvation comes from his belief in the imminence of the eschatological salvation. From every respect, Paul is undoubtedly dependent on Jewish apocalyptic thought, however, he goes beyond Judaism's apocalyptic expectation.

Jewish apocalypticism is primarily concerned with the cosmos and the course of world history, thus, the in-

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[36]Conzelmann, pp. 203. [37]Ibid., p. 266.

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dividual is "only a particle in a concatenation of fate or salvation. From such a view Paul delivers a man by addressing him as a sinner with responsibility and as God's creature whom he treats with mercy."[38]

Primarily, salvation is for Paul futuristic and belongs to his eschatological perspective.[39] However, Paul also stresses his belief that the present is already the time of salvation(Rom. 5:11; 8:1,24; Gal. 4:4, 5:1; I Cor. 6:11; Col. 1:26).

> Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation(II Cor. 6:2).
>
> But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law(Rom. 3:21).

Of course, Paul does not mean that salvation has been manifested in all its aspects. It is provisonal, but the decisive event of salvation-- the death and resurrection of Christ-- has already happened and is already effective.

> Paul sees all the lines of divine activity since the creation as running toward Christ and that therefore for him the Christ event represents the beginning of the divine eschatological salvation that has been planned from time immemorial...the old eon(which is perishing evil eon) still exists and yet the end-time has already begun. 40

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[38]Günther Bornkamm, Paul(New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 147.

[39]Ibid., p. 199.

[40]Werner G. Kümmel, The Theology of the New Testament(Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1973), p. 149.

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Paul describes the lost condition of man with various metaphorical expressions. He also speaks of the salvation that has become a reality in various forms of conceptions and analogies.[41] Salvation is used in both the negative and the positive senses by Paul.[42] Negatively, salvation is liberation from the principalities and powers, from the law, from sin, from death , and from the wrath of God.

b. Salvation as Liberation from the Principalities and powers In Hellenism, man is a stranger in the world. All his longings and desires center in the attempts to escape from this world and its merciless fate and to partake of that heavenly, divine world. So men of Hellenistic time endeavoured to overcome the heimarmene(fate) and to escape from its hold by all possible means.[43] Paul shares the premises of his time. For Paul, human existence is no longer autonomous. It is determined by its involvement in the universe; it is both the object and the arena of the strife between heavenly and earthly powers. "It is conditioned by the answer to the question: 'To which power do you belong? Which

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[41] Calvin Porter, "The Salvation Story in the New Testament", Encounter, XXXV(Spring 1974), 153.

[42] Foerster, VII, 993.

[43] Edward Schweizer, Lordship and Discipleship(Naperville: Allenson, 1961), p. 105.

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Lord do you serve?' Because man can undergo a change of Lordship, the possibility of an existential transformation exists."[44] According to Paul, in this world man is in himself slave to many lords which seek to draw him away from God: sin(Rom. 6:6,20), the law(Rom. 6:14-15, 7:5-6), and the elements of the world(Gal. 4:3,8).[45] Man is always enslaved to a power that stands above him: "Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to any one as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?(Rom. 6:16)

Although Paul shares the premises of the contemporary worldview, he draws a radically different conclusion from others of his time. For Paul, Christ has paid a "cash price" for the Christians with his death, and thereby has acquired them as his possession: "For this purpose Christ died and became alive again, that he might be the Lord of the dead and the living."(Rom.14:9) "You belong to Christ"(I Cor. 3:23).[46] So for Paul, Jesus as Lord liberates men from the slavery to the individual "lords" ; "He who was called in

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[44]Ernst Käseman, Essays on New Testament Themes(London: SCM Press, 1964), p. 117.

[45]Kümmel, p. 186.

[46]Ibid., p. 158.

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the Lord as a slave is a freed man of the Lord. Likewise he who was free when called is a slave of Christ"(I Cor. 7 :22).

Jesus as Kyrios is the "Cosmocrator". Since the resurrection, Jesus as Lord governs not only Christian, but also the whole cosmos and the entire world. Hans Conzelmann explains:

> The dimension in which the saving event is played out is the cosmos.... The saving event does not leave the world so to speak untouched, as in gnosticism, so that only the individual is changed in it by the influx of supernatural power. Rather, the world itself is the scence of the saving event. The individual and his sphere of being are not to be separated. Therefore the world itself must be affected by the saving work. [48]

For the believer, however, the Lord as the cosmocrator reigns not as "Necessity" of Hellenism, but according to II Cor. 3:18, dispenses freedom: the freedom to decide between obedience and disobedience.[49] "Thus faith in the Exalted One is asserted as the only way to salvation, and the law is ruled out as a possible course."[50]

c. Salvation as Liberation from the Law In Galatians 3f., Paul distinguishes the two periods of history before and after the giving of the Law: from Abraham to Moses and from Moses to Christ. Paul argues that God made a covenant of

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[47]Edward Schweizer, Jesus(Richmond: John Knox Press, 1971), pp. 72-73.

[48]Conzelmann, p. 206. [49]Käsemann, p. 117

[50]Conzelmann,pp. 161-162.

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promise with Abraham long before he gave the Law to Moses (Gal. 3:15-18). And he regards all the time from Moses down to the coming of Christ as the time of the Law(Gal. 3:23). Thus Romans 7 is a vivid picture of human existence under the Law understood from a Christian perspective. Paul, after the conversion experience, recognized that the Law keeps man in prison and awakens sinful passions in him or promps him to self-justification before God.

So for Paul, the Law was not capable of giving life to man, rather it becomes an instrument of condemnation(Rom. 5:13), wrath(Rom. 4:15), and death(Rom. 7:19; II Cor. 3:6). However, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us"(Gal. 3:13). So the Christ's vicarious dying on the cross and his resurrection took away the curse of the Law from us. And it is true for the christians that "you are not under the Law but under grace"(Gal. 6:14).[51]

d. Salvation as Liberation from Sin According to Paul, man in his primordial phase-- Adam-- was free from "sin" and "death". However, because of his willful disobedience to God, a new element emerged in man-- "sin". Sin is a reality that has the quality of being a superhuman and demonic power to

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[51] George Eldon Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), pp. 495ff.

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which man are subject as slaves and which exercises its rule through death(Rom. 5:21). So man, ever since Adam, has become the slave to this "sin". That was what man became after Adam's fall.[52]

Sin is also closely bounded up with the Law which functionally enslaves man in the world. And man is always under the death-invoking power of sin so long as he is under the power of the Law.

However, a new beginning has arrived since that fall. The coming of Christ in the form of man was the most decisive, important event in the history of mankind. The whole picture has now changed because of this unique event. Man no longer is in bondage of "sin" and "death". He becomes a free man. But this freedom is not be free unless it it appropriated by the man who believes in Christ.[53] Here, the importance of the ritual of baptism arises. Baptism means union with Christ. It symbolizes the believer's union with Christ in which he dies to his old life and is raised up to walk in newness of life(Rom. 6:1-4). Baptism does not guarantee that the new believer is completely immune from sinning.[54] It is important to understand that it is not sin

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[52]Kümmel, p. 191.

[53]Hans Dieter Betz, "Humanizing Man: Delphi, Plato, and Paul," in James M. Robinson(ed.) Religion and the Humanizing of Man(Waterloo: Council on the Study of Religion, 1970), p. 166.

[54]Ibid., p. 168.

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but the enslavement of sin which has been destroyed. As man's death is the end of his sinfulness, so is the power of sin gone forever by the death and resurrection of Christ. All those who have been liberated from the enslavement of "sin" and "death" are enabled to participate in the new humanity which is described by Paul as love.[55]

For Paul, there is no tension between salvation by faith and salvation by baptism. Rather, "a firm connection between faith and baptism is presupposed: on this rests the fact of the baptismal confession."[56] Without faith, baptism has no meaning. E. Green writes concerning baptism and faith:

> They are properly regarded as belonging together, and this was all the easier in a missionary situation.... Tension would only arise with an automatic doctrine of regeneration through baptism irrespective of faith. [57]

d. Salvation as Liberation from Death "Freedom from the Law and sin is also freedom from death, for death is the 'wage' and the 'fruit' of sin(Rom. 6:23; 7:5; etc.)."[58] For Paul, men are wholly sinners, so men wholly die. In Paul, death appears as a power and the last enemy(I Cor. 15:26)

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[55]Ibid. [56]Conzelmann, p. 271. [57]Green, p. 170.

[58]Rudof Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), I, 345.

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Death literally affects and annihilates all men.[59] But through the death and resurrection of Christ, things have changed(I Cor. 15:22). The Christian has already passed through death, though he must still face his 'natural' death, because in this age the full glory is not yet revealed(Rom. 8:18) and our victory is still by faith(I Cor. 15:54).[60]

e. Salvation as Liberation from the Wrath of God Salvation is also present deliverance from the wrath of God.[61] Paul uses the wrath of God to describe the reaction of God to men of the old age.[62] Wrath is primarily an eschatological concept(Rom. 2:5; I Thess. 1:10). However, "wrath also characterizes the present relationship between God and man(Rom. 1 :18). The wrath of God is not to be understood as equivalent to the anger of pagan deities, which could be alleviated by suitable offerings.[63]

For Paul, God has never been our enemy-- but he does speak of the wrath of God against everything that is evil. The wrath of God is not an emotion telling how God feels, rather it tells how he acts toward sin -- and sinners.[64]

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[59]Alan Richardson, "Death, Die, Mortal, Mortality" in Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, I, 61.

[60]Conzelmann, p. 241. [61]Ibid

[62]D.E.H. Whiteley, The Theology of St. Paul(Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), pp. 61.

[63]H. Kleinknecht, "ὀργή " in Kittel, V, 385.

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Paul, who speaks of God's wrath against men(Rom. 1:18; 5: 9-10), says that God has reconciled Himself with men and world. Thus God has buried the enmity and made peace with us(Rom. 5:1), through Christ's death. Paul also clearly says that Christ died for us, so our sin is removed and we have the certainty of being saved from God's coming wrath(Rom. 5 :10).

f. Salvation as Glorification Positively, salvation means endowment with the divine "glory".[64] In the positive sense, "salvation has to do with the total transformation of man's life and being by God's power at work in Christ."[65] So the positive content of salvation is the redemption of our bodies(Rom. 8:23), and the transformation of our lowly body "to be like his glorious body"(Phil. 3:21).

For Paul, God's glory is associated with his "might" and "power". God's power is supremely effective in the resurrection of Jesus and through him also those who believe in Christ. So the hope to be "glorified with Christ"(Rom. 8:7) is thus the hope to be resurrected and live with him.[66]

Generally, Paul speaks about "the hope of glory" in the eschatological sense, but "the glory of God" seems to have a present dimension too: "We all...are being changed

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[64]Foerester, p. 993. [65]Furnish, p. 124.

[66]Ibid., p. 126.

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into his likeness from one degree of glory to another"(II Cor. 3:18).[67] For the believers, the "Spirit is 'first fruit'(Rom. 11:16) and 'down-payment'(II Cor. 3:18) of the new thing which brings with it 'glory'."[68] Presently, the Spirit is the presence of God's love working with men by giving life(II Cor. 3:6). But it is also a harbinger of that which is to come and thus the ground of hope.(Rom. 15:13)[69]

The believer's transformation into glory, however, is conditional. Although the Christian is alredy justified and adopted as God's son and has the down-payment of salvation through the Spirit, he can still succumb to temptation of the flesh. Through Christ's death and resurrection, the forces of old aeon are already conquered, but not completely destroyed. They will be completely wiped out at the End of the Age. So the Christian's "being saved, his final salvation, depends on his letting the Spirit rule over him, his offering his body as 'a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God' and thereby a 'spiritual worship,' and not being 'conformed to this eon'(Rom. 12:1-2)."[70]

g. Summary In summary, salvation for Paul is liberation from the principalities and powers, law, sin, death and

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[67] Ibid.

[68] Gerhard Kittel, "δοξα" in Kittel, II, 250.

[69] Furnish, p. 130.

[70] Kümmel, pp. 226-227.

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wrath of God. It is also transformation of man's life by God's power at work in Christ. It is the glorification.

Salvation is already established for believers, but primarily it is eschatological. There is a dialectical tension between the "already" and the "not yet" of salvation in Paul's thought. The "not yet" dimension of salvation could help us not to be "satisfied with the present" but always change it in the light of the future hope.[71] Professor James H. Cone believes that this "not yet" of salvation sustains man in his "struggle against present injustice."[72] So for Paul, salvation is eschatological as well as a present reality.

Salvation is a process of individualization. It must be appropriated by the individual through his faith. However, baptism shows that the individual person "enters into a relationship with a historical and societal unit, the Christian church, which understands itself as the 'Body of Christ'"[73] Eucharist also shows that salvation is a social reality. So for Paul, salvation is both personal and

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[71] Leander E. Keck, "Evangelism in the Theological Perspective" in James T. Laney(ed.) Evangelism(New York: Hawthorn, 1975), p. 53.

[72] James H. Cone, "What Does It Mean To Be Saved?" in Henry Young(ed.) Preaching the Gospel(Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), p. 23.

[73] Betz, p. 169.

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social, individual and corporate. It includes man, his world and cosmos. And salvation concerns the whole man. So there is no room for dichtomy of body and spirit, "this-worldly" and "other-worldly", individual and corporate salvation in Paul's thought.

Salvation is not a possibility immanent in man or in the world. Salvation comes from God. So the idea of man's achieving salvation by his merits is excluded in Paul.

3. Salvation in John

John only once speaks of "Savior"(4:42), once of "salvation"(4:22) and six times uses the verb form "to save"(3:17; 5:34; 10:9; 11:12; 12:27, 47). As this relatively rare use of these words shows, the theological distinctiveness of John's Gospel does not come expression in σώζω or σωτηρία.[75]

John constantly equates "salvation" with "life" which is interchangeable with "eternal life".[76] Thus, the phrase "have eternal life" is parallel to "be saved"(3:16, 17; 5:3). For John, Jesus is the incarnated Creator, so those who accept him receive the "eternal life", while those

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[75]Foerster, p. 997.

[76]Peter C. Hodgson, New Birth of Freedom(Philadelphia:Fortress Press, 1976), p. 263.

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who repudiate him receives condemnation.[77] "He who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life. (John 5:24)" Accordingly, salvation comes from the belief that Jesus is the Son from the Father.

In John's Gospel, Jesus constantly talks about himself, his origin, and his mission in the world. On the contrary, in the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus seldom speaks about himself but about the Kingdom of God. With the help of the "I am" formula in John, "Jesus makes the exclusive claim that salvation is mediated only through him."[78] By his coming, as the one sent from the Father, he gives to men the salvation which he himself is.[79]

For John, salvation is truly present when men respond rightly to Jesus. Whoever believes in Jesus enters into life that is eternal. "Eternal life" is not sheer perpetuity, on the contrary, it has to do with the quality of life. "It is defined primarily not by length but by relationship."[80] John sees that eternal life is present in Jesus, and can be experienced here and now by our relationship with him who is the resurrection and the life. "Life" which is eternal

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[77]Keck, p. 53.

[78]Kümmel, p. 284.

[79]Robert T. Fortna, "From Christology to Soteriology : A Redaction -- Critical Study of Salvation in the Fourth Gospel" Interpretation, XXVII(January 1973), 31-47.

[80]Green, p. 132.

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life is available to men through the "self-offering" of Jesus.[81] It came through his self-giving death(12:27-33). This self-giving love is the "modality of life" which is stronger than death. Death separates us from one another and from God, but love unites us to one another and to God. The ultimate criterion of love is the willingness of one to surrender to death for another's sake as it was supremely exemplified in Jesus(10:15, 17; 12:27-33).[82]

As love is the modality of life, wherever love exists, there the Father and the Son are found. "If a man loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him"(14:23). L. Keck puts it:

> Thus John relativizes the difference between heaven and earth, then and now; for if the Father and the Son come to live with the believer in history, then there is virtually no difference between life now and life after death when the believer moves to the Father's house (John 14:1 ff.) 83

John does not completely eliminate the future dimension of salvation(11:26), but he strongly emphasizes the "nowness of salvation".[84] That means in John "the apocalyptic ideas are stripped away."[85]

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[81] Ibid.

[82] Keck, p. 52.

[83] Ibid., p. 62.

[84] Ibid.

[85] Conzelmann, p. 328.

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There are other metaphors for salvation in John. The phrase "grace and truth" which occurs twice in the prologue(1:14, 17) is the predicate of Christ pertaining to salvation. "Grace" does not appear again in John, but "truth" with its cognates appear prominently.[86] "Light" is a metaphor of salvation related to truth(1:4,5,9,; 3:19; 8:12; 9:5; 12:46 etc.). These passages intend to indicate that Jesus Christ belongs to the realm of the divine. The other characteristic Johannine salvation metaphor is "peace" and "joy". Christ gives to his disciples "peace": "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you"(14:27a cf. 16: 33a etc.). Also Christians have an abiding joy, because their joy is based upon God's saving action in Christ. "These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full"(15:11 etc.).[87]

In summary, salvation which is eternal life is available now to man by faith in Jesus who is the Son from the Father. John's strong emphasis on the "nowness of salvation" could provide a good theological perspective to the ecumenicals who emphasize the importance of this earthly life. In contrast to Paul who believes that Christians live in a tension between the "already" and the "not yet", John greatly reduces this tension by emphasizing the "nowness of

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[86] Fortna, p. 41.

[87] Conzelmann, p. 329.

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salvation". However, "the more John emphasizes this idea, the less he is able to speak of the redemption of the world."[84] So professor Keck believes that Paul who keeps the "tension" provides a more adequate theological paradigm in our day.

4. Summary

In this chapter we have examined the concept of salvation in the Old and New Testaments. We found that salvation comes from God. It is based on His righteousness and grace, not on man's merits. Salvation is already real, achieved for the believer, but it is not yet wholly realized. It will be consummated at the end of the age. In the Bible, salvation is wholistic. There is no distinction between "this-worldly" and "other-worldly", physical-spiritual, or personal-social salvation. Salvation concerns the whole person, himself and his cosmos.

The biblical perspective does not allow for the evangelicals to proclaim the gospel disregarding social justice. Nor does it allow the ecumenicals to be involved in the liberation movement without proclaiming the gospel which is the power of salvation. In the next chapter, we

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[84] Keck, p. 42.

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shall see how the recovery of the biblical perspective on salvation can bring both the evangelicals and ecumenicals together in the common mission of the church.

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Chapter IV

FROM POLARIZATION TO CONVERGENCE

A. NEW BEGINNING

As we have observed in chapter II, from the sixties and the beginning of the seventies there has been a growing polarization between the ecumenicals and evangelicals. Donald A. McGavran in his recent open letter to the World Council of Churches puts the "ecumenical" and "evangelical" positions in two contrasting views. McGavran says:

> We have come to the conclusion that two radically different systems of doctrine are battling for acceptance. The one believes that the Bible is the inspired, authoritative, infallible Word of God. The other believes that the Bible is the words of men through which God speaks on occasion. The one believes in eternal salvation as well as temporal improvements. The other believes that temporal improvements are certain, but beyond them we are in the realm of speculative opinions. The one believes that the church is the Bride of Christ. The other that the church is one of God's many instrumentalities to bring about a juster human social order. The one believes that no one comes to the Father but by Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Bible and consequently proclaims him as divine and only Saviour. The other, that the cosmic Christ has spoken and is speaking in all religions and consequently dialogue with other religions is the correct way of mission. [1]

It is clear that for McGavran, the evangelicals represent one view and the ecumenicals represent the other view.

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[1] Donald McGavran, "Will Nairobi Champion the Whole Man," in Church Growth Bulletin, (July 1975), 463.

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However, apart from this extreme right wing position of McGavran and Beyerhaus who also agree with McGavran, there has been a significant shift from the confrontation toward mutual understanding. Gradually the ecumenicals are being forced to recognize that they cannot achieve their goals without the grass roots support from the local churches. They are beginning to acknowledge the importance of evangelism and discover that they are not going to be able to cure all the social ills of the world.

Also the evangelicals are beginning to exercise self-criticism and realize the importance of the Christian's social responsibility in proclaiming the gospel of salvation.

Beginning in the sixties, the evangelicals' renewed interest in social justice began to be reflected in their conferences. The first congress of the global evangelical meeting was held at Wheaton, Illinois in 1966. The "Wheaton Declaration" which was adopted at that conference declared:

> Whereas evangelicals in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries led in social concern, in the twentieth century many have lost the biblical perspective and limited themselves only to preaching a gospel of individual salvation without sufficient involvement in their social and community responsibilities... Today, however, evangelicals are increasingly convinced that they must involve themselves in the great social problem men are facing. 2

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2 "Wheaton Declaration," International Review of Mission, LV(October 1966), 458ff.

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It also confessed, "we have sinned grievously. We are guilty of unscriptural isolation from the world that too often keeps us from honestly facing and coping with its concerns."

The U.S. Congress on Evangelism, Minneapolis, 1969 also called for an end to the artificial polarization between evangelism and social action, although the primacy of proclamation was reaffirmed and social involvement was conceived primarily in personal terms.[3] Also a group of young evangelicals assembled in Chicago in November, 1973 for the "Workshop on Evangelical Social Concern". They promulgated the 473-word social action statement. In the Chicago Declaration, they confessed past sins, emphasized that God required both love and justice, pointed out that the Christian life demands total discipleship, and proclaimed: "So we call our fellow evangelical Christians to demonstrate repentance in a Christian discipleship that confronts social and political injustice of our nation."[4] So the ecumenicals and evangelicals are gradually discovering the wholistic bibilical concept of salvation in the mission. The wholistic

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[3]George Wilson, Evangelism Now(Minneapolis: World Wide, 1970), pp. 195ff.

[4]Robert Linder, "The Resurgence of Evangelical Social Concern(1925-75)" in David Wells & John Woodbridge (eds.) The Evangelicals(Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975), p. 205. Also see Ronald J. Sider(ed.) The Chicago Declaration(Carol Stream: Creation House, 1974).

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understanding of salvation is well formulated in the World Conference on Salvation Today at Bangkok in 1973.

B. THE BANGKOK CONFERENCE ON SALVATION TODAY IN 1973

From December 29, 1972 to January 9, 1973, the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches held an international meeting in Bangkok, Thailand to consider the meaning of "Salvation Today". It marked the conclusion of a four-year world wide study on "Salvation Today" coordinated by the Commission on Mission and Evangelism of the W.C.C. Study groups and discussions were held on all six continents, many of which produced written reports.

When the theme of the conference "Salvation Today" was made in 1968, there was certain risk. Emilio Castro, Director of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the W.C.C., gives it expression:

> Those who were apprehensive about the actions which the W.C.C. had taken to share in the historical cries of mankind were afraid that in Bangkok this "horizontal" line would receive some kind of sacralization. On the other hand, those who were engaged in the human fight for liberation on various political fronts in their own countries afraid that Bangkok might mean -- what for them would be a step backward--taking refuge in pious definitions of faith without consideration given to the daily earthly realities. 5

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[5]Emilio Castro, "The New Opportunity," International Review of Mission, LXII(February 1973), 136.

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However, generally the choice of the theme was welcomed as a return to the essentials of the Christian faith and mission. The purpose of the conference was announced as being (1) to celebrate and proclaim the richness of salvation as a gift of God through the Holy Spirit, as witnessed to by the Scriptures, and as experienced by men and women today, in their struggle for meaning and fullness of life and social justice; (2) to consider the implications of "Salvation Today" for the churches and the ecumenical movement; (3) to help participants and their sponsoring bodies to act on these implications.[6]

The conference divided into small groups, each concentrating on a different approach to the subject. Some practiced contemplation, and others approached the matter through art, celebrating the reality of salvation. But most people chose to explore the meaning of salvation through the study of biblical passages. Next the conference was divided into three sections to discuss "Salvation and Cultural identity", "Salvation and Social Justice", and "Renewal of the Churches in relation to Salvation".

Perhaps the most succinct and clearest answer to the question of "Salvation Today" on the basis of biblical perspective came from the statement prepared by Jurgen

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[6]Arne Sovik, Salvation Today(Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1973), pp. 44ff.

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Moltmann and others and adopted by section II. Beginning with Jesus' sermon at Nazareth(Luke 4:18) they went on to point out that through Christ men and women are liberated from the prison of guilt and of apathy, and are empowered with all their energies and possibilities to share in his messianic work. "Through his death on the cross and his resurrection from the dead, hope of salvation becomes realistic and reality hopeful"[7]

It was this section above all that stressed the biblical wholistic concept of salvation.

> The salvation which Christ brought, and in which we participate, offers a comprehensive wholeness in this divided life. We understand salvation as newness of life--the unfolding of true humanity in the fulness of God(Col. 2:9). It is salvation of the soul and the body, of the individual and society, mankind and "the groaning creation"(Rom. 8:19). As evil works both in personal life and in exploitative social structures which humiliate humankind, so God's justice manifests itself both in the justification of the sinner and in social and political justice. As guilt is both individual and corporate so God's liberating power changes both persons and structures. We have to overcome the dichotomies in our thinking between soul and body, person and society, human kind and creation. Therefore we see the struggles for economic justice, political freedom and cultural renewal as elements in the total liberation of the world through the mission of God. This liberation is finally fulfilled when "death is swallowed up in victory"(I Cor. 15:55). This comprehensive notion of salvation demands of the whole of the people of God a matching comprehensive approach to their participation in salvation. 8

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[7]World Council of Churches, Bangkok Aeembly 1973 (Geneva: 1973), p. 88.

[8]Ibid., pp. 88-89.

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On church growth, numerical growth was not affirmed as the ultimate criterion of faithfulness of the mission of the church. But neither it was abandoned. "There can be no numerical growth without(social) renewal... On the other hand, every(social) renewal should result in numerical growth, since the power of the Gospel is communicative."[9]

The negative evaluation of the Bangkok conference comes from some evangelicals including Peter Beyerhaus who was present at the meeting. Beyerhaus thinks that "scripture... was not allowed to play its majestic role in Bangkok. It was complemented, or rather substituted by a situationalist approach, called in modern ecumenical jargon 'contexuality.'"[10] He further charges that "under an apparently biblical and theological dress the concept of salvation is deflated and robbed of its Christian particularity in such a way that every liberating experience can be designated as 'salvation'"[11] According to Donald A. McGavran, of the ecumenicals at Bangkok, "being saved" means "having more

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[9]Ibid., p. 101.

[10]Peter Beyerhaus, "The Theology of Salvation at Bangkok" in Ralph Winter(ed.) The Evangelical Response to Bangkok(Pasadena: Carey, 1973), p. 111.

[11]Peter Beyerhaus, Bangkok 73(Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), p. 74.

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food, more justice, more clothes, more freedom, more production, less disease, more brotherhood, more peace, in short more this-worldly improvement."[12] To the evangelicals, however, salvation is a "vertical relationship(of man with God) which issues in horizontal relationships(of man with men). The vertical must not be displaced by horizontal."[13]

However, apart from this extreme evaluation, many evangelicals positively evaluated the Bangkok conference. Orlando Costas, an outspoken Latin American evangelical says, it(Bangkok) certainly marked a step toward wholeness in mission."[14]

"Fortunately for the whole church", according to James Sherer, "Bangkok rejected polarization on the left marked by the debate at the Uppsala(1968) on 'Renewal in Mission' and also polarization on the right represented by the Frankfurt Declaration(1970) on 'The Fundamental Crisis in Christian Mission.'"[15] At Bangkok, the classical under-

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[12]Donald A. McGavran, "Salvation Today" in Winter, p. 27.

[13]Ibid., pp. 31 ff.

[14]Orlando E. Costas, The Church and its Mission (Wheaton: Tyndale, 1974), p. 300.

[15]James Sherer, "Bangkok: A Lutheran Appraisal," Dialog, XIII(Spring 1974), 137.

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standing of mission: evangelization, conversion, church planting, was not repudiated. At the same time, the thrust of the Geneva Conference on Church and Society(1966) and the Uppsala Assembly(1968) has been adopted.

The theology of salvation formulated at Bangkok achieved a synthesis not only of the positions of the evangelicals and ecumenicals, but more importantly it reflected the wholistic biblical meaning of salvation-- both souls and bodies, persons and their social structures. "The dominant note at Bangkok was 'both/and', i.e. both evangelism and social justice, not 'either/or'"[16] So the wholistic understanding of salvation at Bangkok prevented a further splitting of ecumenicals and evangelicals and provided the cause of healing and reconciliation between two circles.

B. LAUSANNE 1974 AND NAIROBI 1975

We have seen at the beginning of this chapter the renewed social concern among the evangelicals through the Wheaton of 1966 and other conferences. The growing evangelical social concern was fully expressed at the "International Congress on World Evangelization" which was held at Lausanne, Switzerland in July 1974. The Lausanne Covenant clause 5 reads:

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[16] Ibid.

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> We affirm that God is both the Creator and Judge of all men. We therefore should share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men from every kind of oppression. Because mankind is made in the image of God, every person, regardless of race, religion, colour, culture, class, sex or age, has an intrinsic dignity because of which he should be respected and served, not exploited. Here too we express penitence both for our neglect and for having sometimes regarded evangelism and social concern as mutually exclusive. Although reconciliation with man is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless we affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and man, our love for our neighbor and our obedience to Jesus Christ. The message of salvation implies also a message of judgment upon every form of alienation, oppression and discrimination, and we should not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist... The salvation we claim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead. 17

This drastic change in the evangelical understanding of social responsibility at Lausanne may be seen most clearly by comparing the Lausanne statements with one of the previous evangelical conferences. At the 1966 World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin, many evangelicals still considered social involvement an enemy of "biblical evangelism" to be avoided. Billy Graham proclaimed:

> There is confusion about evangelism among both its enemies and its friends. The enemies of biblical evangelism-- which demands a personal confrontation with the claims of Jesus Christ-- are keeping the name, but substituting another practice. The 'new' evangelism says

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[17] J.D. Douglass(ed.), Let the Earth Hear His Voice (Minneapolis: World Wide, 1975), p. 4.

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> soul winning is passe. It wants to apply Christian principles to the social order. Its proponents want to make the prodigal son comfortable, happy and prosperous in the far country without leading him back to the Father. 18

The Berlin congress issued a long section condemning racism, but it did so in purely personal terms, and in defining the one task of the church it spoke only of evangelism.

However, Lausanne was different. The question of social responsiboility was dealt with seriously. One of the leading American evangelicals, Carl F. Henry said, in his paper presented at the conference, that the church, under Christ's lordship is sent into the world to proclaim personal and social redemption. He further insisted that institutional evil requires institutional change.[19] But, it was the third world theologicans like Rene Padilla and Samuel Escobar who aroused the conference focus to Christian social responsiblity. Rene Padilla, who is an associate general secretary of the International Fellowship of Ecumenical students in Bueons Aires, spoke against the other-worldly gospel that stresses man's vertical relation to God but ignores man's horizontal relation to man, a sal-

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[18]Billy Graham, "What We Expect at the Berlin Congress," World Vision Magazine, X(October 1966), 4.

[19]Carl F. Henry, "Christian Personal and Social Ethics in Relation to Racism, Poverty, War and Otner Problems", in Douglass, pp. 1163 ff.

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vation that does not issue in works to heal the sick, bind up the wounds of those who have been assaulted, feed those who are hungry, and clothe those who are naked. He also asserted that the "individual does not exist in isolation, and consequently that it is not possible to speak of salvation with no reference to the world of which he is a part."[20] Also Samuel Escobar, a Latin American who is the secretary of the Intervarsity Fellowship of Canada declared at the congress, "salvation and evangelization considered only in individualistic terms or in verbal terms are also heresies that fall short of the totality of biblical revelation."[21]

For the evangelicals at Lausanne, the socio-political involvement is not just a by-product of the evangelism. Rather it is a constitutive part of the whole Christian mission in the world. In the previous conferences(Wheaton 1966, Berlin 1966, U.S. Congress on Evangelism, Minneapolis 1969), the evangelicals began to call for an end to the artificial polarization between evangelism and social action. But on each occasion, the primacy of proclamation was reaffirmed and social involvement was conceived primarily in personal terms. By this it was understood that the renewal of the individual also reforms society. But this underesti-

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[20] Rene Padilla, "Evangelism and the World", in Douglass, pp. 116 ff.

[21] Samuel Escobar, "Evangelism and Man's Search for Freedom, Justice and Fulfillment", in Douglass, p. 312.

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mates the existence and the power to corporate evil. And changes in the lives of individuals do not automatically lead to changes in the structure of society. So Carl F. Henry rightly said that "institutional evil requires institutional action."

The discovery of "wholistic salvation" in the Bible led the evangelicals at Lausanne to affirm both personal salvation and socio-political involvement. Although the covenant clause 5 made a distinction between "evangelism" and "socio-political involvement", by saying "social action is not evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation", nevertheless it affirmed that "evangelism and soci--political involvement are both part" of the Christian mission for the salvation of man.

Again, in recent years, evangelicals have traditionally supported conservative political parties favoring the maintenance of the status quo. The Covenant, however, warns that the church "must not be identified with any particular culture, social or political system, or human ideology."[22]

The Lausanne Covenant clause 5 states that "reconciliation with man is not reconciliation with God." It did so in reaction to the ecumenicals' emphasis on the reconciliation with man. In the recorded discussion between

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[22] Douglass, p. 5

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Emilio Castro, Director of the World Council's Comission on World Mission and Evangelism and Paul Little, Associate Director of the International Congress on World Evangelization, Little asserted that "the Bible makes it clear that the pre-requisite for reconciliation with man is reconciliation with God." It was met by Castro's assertion that "the Bible also says that before you seek to reconcile yourself with God, you must first reconcile yourself with your brother."

So we can see the relationship between reconciliation with man and reconciliation with God was not wholistically stated in the Lausanne covenant, and it will be a continuing issue in ecumenical-evangelical relationships. However, a polarizing "either/or" approach must be replaced with a biblical "both/and".

The transition from traditional evangelism with its stress on personal salvation to the new face of evangelism with its emphasis on both personal salvation and socio-political action met some resistance among the evangelicals. At Lausanne, Peter Beyerhaus pleaded for "a world-wide association of evangelicals" to combat the "The Mission of Barabbas" of the W.C.C.[23]

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[23]Peter Beyerhaus, "World Evangelization and the Kingdom of God", in Douglass, p. 290.

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However, fortunately for the whole church, the Lausanne conference rejected the "either/or" approach and the polarization did not materialize. Rather a great deal of ground work was done by the evangelicals toward a wholistic understanding of salvation in Christian mission.

Also on the ecumenical sides, the Nairobi Assembly of 1975 took a positive step toward a wholistic understanding of salvation in Christian mission. At Nairobi, there was no verbal hesitancy about proclaiming Christ as Savior of man as well as communities and the world. The ecumenicals are realizing that the salvation Jesus offers must be appropriated by the individual who is in society. So they are discovering that salvation is both personal and social.

In the approved report of Section I(Confessing Christ Today) of the Nairobi Assembly, it says that "Christians are therefore called to engage in both evangelism and social action. We are commissioned to proclaim the gospel of Christ to the ends of the earth. Simultaneously, we are commanded to struggle to realize God's will for peace, justice, and freedom throughout society."[24] So the wholistic biblical perspective on salvation is beginning to be reflected in the ecumenical assembly's pronouncements. Even Harold

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[24]David M. Patton(ed.), Breaking Barriers(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), p. 43.

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Lindsell, the editor of "Christianity Today" and himself theologically among the right wing of evangelicals, observes that "Narobi was a substantial improvement over Uppsala. The radical cast of the 1968 assembly had yielded to a more centrist approach, a better balance, and the rediscovery of evangelism as an important part of the mission of the Church."[25]

A more balanced observer Dr. J. Robert Nelson, professor of theology at Boston University, says:

> The sharp dichotomy between individualistic salvation and the witness for freedom with justice, which caused much contention at Uppsala, was repaired at Nairobi. The apostles of liberation, development and justice were not reticent, but they admitted willingly that there is more to salvation than such social goals. And Protestant evangelicals who stress personal conversion and piety ...could admit and affirm the social and political dimension. 26

Dr. Nelson further comments:

> The theological digressions of recent secularized theology have given way to more traditional and biblical categories of expression. But the problems of pressing the Christian mission in the milieus of racial, cultural and national diversity are presented realistically in the report on "Confessing Christ Today." 27

In summary, in this chapter we observed that the wholistic biblical concept of salvation as formulated at

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[25]Harold Lindsell, "Nairobi: Crisis in Credibility", Christianity Today, XX(January 2, 1976), 342.

[26]J. Robert Nelson, "The World Council's Second Generation Takes Over", Christian Century, XCII(February 18, 1976), 145-146.

[27]Ibid., p. 146.

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Bangkok is beginning to be reflected in evangelical and ecumenical conferences. There are good signs that both evangelicals and ecumenicals are in the process of discovering the wholistic concept of salvation in their understanding mission in the world.

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Chapter IV

CONCLUSION

In this project, we began by describing the polarization of "evangelicals" and "ecumenicals" into two groups within the Christian church. In chapter I, we have learned that the evangelicals have emphasized the priority of evangelism for the salvation of man. For them, the social involvement is the fruit of evangelism. On the other hand, for the ecumenicals salvation is primarily social. They overemphasized the horizontal aspect of salvation. So they construed salvation in terms of humanization, revolution, and political liberation.

In chapter II, we have seen that the biblical conception of salvation is wholistic. It is both personal and social, "this worldly" and "other worldly", vertical and horizontal. The dichotomy of personal or social salvation cannot be justified on the basis of the biblical perspective.

In chapter III, we have observed that the scene is gradually changing from the confrontation between evangelicals and ecumenicals to mutual understanding. At Bangkok the biblical wholistic concept of salvation was affirmed. The salvation which Christ brings is "salvation of the

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soul and the body, of the individual and society, mankind and the groaning creation(Rom. 8:19).[1] Furthermore, we have seen a significant change among the evangelicals assembled at Lausanne on their understanding of Christian social responsibility. So the Lausanne covenant clause 5 affirmed that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both integral part of the christian mission. Richard Quebedeaux observes this new awareness of social dimension within the evangelicals by saying: "only a decade ago it would have been well nigh impossible to imagine the degree to which this metamorphosis have now actually taken place."[2] At the Nairobi Assembly of 1975, the ecumenicals affirmed the importance of evangelism in mission and thus included the personal dimension of salvation. So the ecumenicals are beginning to embrace both evangelism and social action in mission.

By beginning to discover the biblical wholistic understanding of salvation, the evangelical acknowledge the inseparability of social justice and evangelism. They are beginning to realize that the message of personal salvation,

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[1] World Council of Churches, Bangkok Assembly 1973 (Geneva, 1973), p. 88.

[2] Richard Quebedeaux, "The Evangelicals: New Trends and New Tensions", Christianity and Crisis, XXXVI(September 20, 1976), 197.

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repentance, and conversion, of being incorporated into the church, sounds hollow unless this message proves power to change the world. Ecumenicals are realizing that "lasting change in the end must be the product of men who care more about others than themselves because they know Christ."[3] They also recognize that they cannot achieve their goals without grass roots support from tradition-oriented local churches. Of course, all the differences have obviously not disappeared but they can be held within a framework of mutual love, respect and constant communication.

In conclusion, it is our contention that the biblical wholistic understanding of salvation can provide the converging point for both the evangelicals and the ecumenicals in common Christian mission. In such a divided and polarized world, an undivided and wholistic meaning of salvation can lead both sides to come to mutual understanding, consensus, and convergence for mission. Already good signs are beginning to appear as we have observed in the third chapter. As we believe one Lord and proclaim one gospel for the salvation of the whole man and his world, so it is urgent for us to carry our common mission together in this rapidly changing world.

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[3]Richard J. Coleman, Issues of Theological Warfare: Evangelicals and Liberals (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), p. 182.

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